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# *The President's Daily Brief*

*8 May 1972*

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# THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

8 May 1972

## PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Communist ground forces in Vietnam carried out two heavy assaults in the central highlands over the weekend and otherwise kept up pressure mainly by shelling attacks. Communist propaganda continues highly optimistic over prospects in South Vietnam.

[redacted] *(Page 1)* 25X1

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The Soviets apparently believe that Israeli obduracy precludes any progress on the Middle East in talks with the US at this time. *(Page 3)*

On the eve of the Bundestag debate, efforts continue to formulate a statement on the Eastern treaties and future options, while strains on party unity in both camps remain intense. *(Page 4)*



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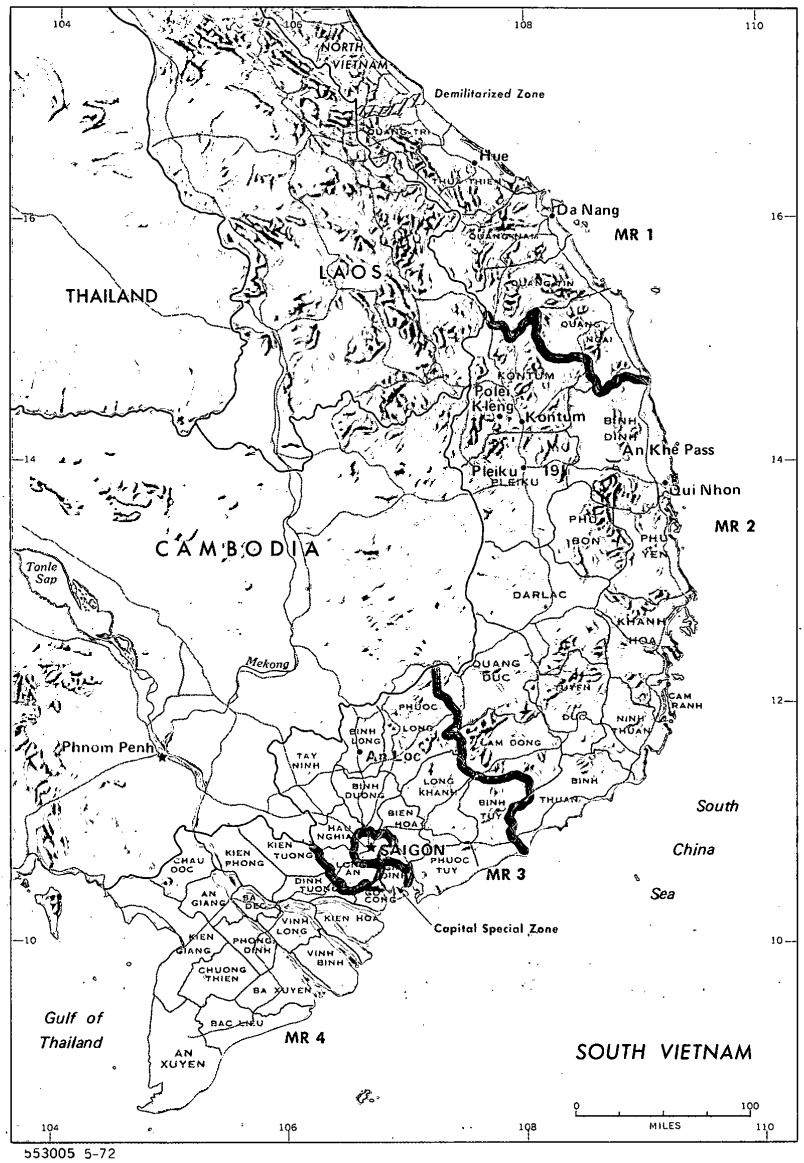


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# VIETNAM

The Communists maintained military pressure over the weekend on the major battlefronts mainly by shelling attacks, although enemy ground forces carried out two heavy assaults in the central highlands. North Vietnamese sappers penetrated and heavily damaged one South Vietnamese strongpoint north of Pleiku. Northwest of Kontum City, South Vietnamese forces withstood another strong enemy assault at Polei Kleng. The enemy is continuing to move large numbers of troops and heavy equipment toward Hue.

There have been further reports of enemy plans to step up attacks against Da Nang and in southern Binh Dinh Province. The Da Nang airfield was shelled lightly during the weekend. Authorities in the city are concerned that the enemy may be mixing in with the thousands of refugees converging there. In Binh Dinh, [redacted] enemy forces have been infiltrating into Qui Nhon, the provincial capital, and there are signs that the enemy intends to renew pressure in the An Khe Pass to block Route 19--the main South Vietnamese supply route into the highlands. 25X1

Farther south, the Communists have been hitting An Loc with more than 1,000 rounds of mortar and artillery fire a day. A prisoner taken over the weekend says that the commander of the Communist 9th Division has been reprimanded for his failure to seize An Loc and that the 5th Division now has been assigned the mission.

Propaganda from Vietnamese Communist outlets continues highly optimistic over the prospects in South Vietnam. Military action is now claimed to have opened up the possibility of "total victory," and is being compared to the battle of Dien Bien Phu, the anniversary of which the Communists celebrated yesterday.

> *Although the propaganda is intended to prepare the Communist rank and file for further intensive military action, we believe that it also reflects a basically optimistic assessment of the progress of the military campaign after the first month.*

(continued)





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Communist propaganda is also devoting increased attention to exhorting the South Vietnamese populace to rise up in "insurrection" in support of the military offensive. [redacted] 25X1

According to the North Vietnamese military newspaper, political agitation and the organization of liberated areas has now become one of the "most important" tasks in the offensive.

[redacted] 25X1

25X1

[redacted] 25X1

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* * *

[redacted] 25X1

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## USSR - MIDDLE EAST

Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Y. D. Pyrlin told a US Embassy officer in Moscow on Friday that the Soviets were not currently devising any new proposals on the Middle East and that he did not expect much in the way of results on this subject from the meetings with President Nixon. An influential Egyptian journalist, Mohamad Oda, came away from Moscow last week with the same impression after talking with Soviet journalists and academicians.

*From the remarks of both Pyrlin and Oda, it appears that the Soviets believe that Israeli obduracy precludes any progress on the Middle East at this time. They may nevertheless wish to come up with something to lend impetus to the negotiating process in the hope of reviving bilateral Middle East talks with the US and persuading the Arabs that Moscow is active in seeking a political settlement.*

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*Moscow may propose a reopening of the Suez Canal provided that Israel agrees to withdraw its forces from the east bank and does not insist on immediate canal transit rights.*





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## WEST GERMANY

As efforts continue to formulate a statement of the German view that the Eastern treaties do not preclude a German peace treaty or eventual reunification, government and opposition leaders are concentrating their energies on maintaining party discipline for the debate and vote scheduled for tomorrow and Wednesday. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

[redacted] Barzel, in an effort to regroup his forces, may announce in today's CDU caucus that he will seek to postpone the debate even further. The fact that West Berlin deputies can vote on procedural matters, however, would net Brandt an additional two votes in countering any such stalling tactic. 25X1





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NOTE

USSR-Cuba: [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1



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